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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CAPTION ADDED)

SENSITIVE

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: WASIT,S PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MOVES TO OUST
EX-BA,ATHISTS

REF: A. BAGHDAD 285
[1](#)B. BAGHDAD 296
[1](#)C. BAGHDAD 338

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary and Comment: Wasit,s Provincial Council (PC) passed a unanimous resolution on February 10 to dismiss former Ba,athists from provincial and national ministry government jobs unless they publicly renounce their former affiliation. It is unclear if the resolution is constitutional or how it might actually be enforced. Significantly, even secular and moderate PC members appear to have supported the measure. Deputy PC Chairman Majid Ali Jabber (Da,wa) complained to PRToffs about former Ba,ath members re-entering government service, and questioned the U.S. role in supporting Ba,athists in the current deliberation over CoR candidate disqualifications. PRT Team Leader clarified that the United States strongly opposes the Ba,ath, and did not interfere in Iraqi political and judicial decisions regarding de-Ba,athification. He emphasized that the Iraq citizens, including candidates, have a right to due process under Iraqi law, and that the United States urged that a transparent de-Ba,ath process be put into place. End Summary and Comment.

[1](#)2. (SBU) PRToffs met with Wasit PC Deputy Chairman Majid Ali Jabber (Da,wa) on Feb. 11 in al-Kut. Jabber addressed a unanimous resolution which the PC had passed the previous day, which the local press described as &banning8 former Ba,athists from government jobs in Wasit. According to Jabber, the resolution called for all former members of the Ba,ath party who worked (or sought) government jobs to denounce the Ba,ath and their membership therein, and to turn in any weapons they possessed. The resolution applied to both provincial employees and employees of the provincial offices of national ministries. Employees who satisfied these conditions could retain their jobs. The resolution,s final provision called for &command or division-level8 Ba,athists to be referred to the National-Level Committee of Justice and Accountability for investigation.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Jabber did not clarify the provision,s constitutionality and how (or if) it would actually be enforced. In the wake of the de-Ba,athification exclusion order by the parliamentary Accountability and Justice Commission (AJC) (refs A-C), PC members may feel under pressure from their parties and supporters in this Shi,a stronghold to bolster their anti-Ba,ath bona fides with moves of this type. Jabber argued that many former Ba-athists had re-entered government service and it was up to provincial authorities to take a stand against this. (COMMENT: PRT was struck by the apparent support for the measure by secular PC members, including members of the Iraqiyya coalition, which was disproportionately affected by the parliamentary AJC,s de-Ba,athification exclusion order. END COMMENT.)

[1](#)4. (SBU) The PC Deputy also remarked on anti-Ba,ath

demonstrations in the provincial capital, al-Kut, on February 10, and lamented that the United States appeared to support the reinstatement of former Ba,athist CoR candidates. The PRT Team Leader corrected him, noting that despite inaccurate media reports, the U.S. did not support former Ba,athists and was not lobbying for their reinstatement as candidates. He emphasized U.S. support for the independence of Iraqi political and judicial institutions and clarified that the United States had not intervened to influence the AJC or the Cassation Chamber in any way. The TL also noted the concern of the UN and the United States that whatever processes were put in place be as transparent and fair as possible, and that progress toward reconciliation not stall. Jabber seemed readily mollified and thanked the PRToffs for clarification of the U.S. position.

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